LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY, INC.

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February 7, 1995

Honorable Benjamin Gilman
Chairman
Committee on International Relations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

H.R. 7, the National Security Revitalization Act, as amended by your committee last week puts in serious jeopardy the security interests of the United States in Central and Eastern Europe.

Until the adoption of the Torricelli amendment by your committee, the United States advanced a consistent policy to solidify the democratic gains of Central and Eastern Europe. That policy is now in doubt and we urge you to do everything in your power to restore an even-handed approach to all of the nations of Central & Eastern Europe who are currently active participants in the Partnership for Peace (PFP) program.

The Torricelli amendment has established a "Russia-first" policy directive to the Administration on security matters and banished most of the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe from European security structures, once again dividing Europe into the "haves" and "have nots".

By eliminating paragraph 7 under sec. 603.(U.S. Policy) the committee appears to have ruled that no current members of PFP other than Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, should be eligible for eventual NATO membership. By adding paragraph 8 under sec. 603. (U.S. Policy), has enshrined a Russian veto on future NATO expansion by blessing a U.S. policy "to cooperate closely with Russia on security issues". We have noted with great disappointment that this paragraph does not use the language of "consult with" or some less formal level of contact with the Russian government.

The members of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. view with grave seriousness the efforts of the current Russian government to undermine the democratic gains of Central and East European nations by insisting on a Russian sphere of influence. Russia is at war, killing the innocent civilians of Chechnya.